

MINNEAPOLIS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

**ROOM 317, CITY HALL
350 SOUTH FIFTH STREET
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55415-1385**

EXCERPTS FROM THE

**PERMIT REVIEW/PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2003
5:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. **Present:** Commissioners Stevens, Koski, Neiswander, Lindquist (left at 6:38), Messenger, Housum, Anderson, Grover, Glancy, Dunn and Nordstrom.

Staff Present: Mathis, Lucas, Jensen, Graham.

PERMIT REVIEW/PUBLIC HEARING

5. 706-08 South First Street, St. Anthony Falls Historic District, by the Minnesota Historical Society, for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a signage package. (Staff, Greg Mathis)

Commissioner Stevens recused himself and announced he is abstaining from the discussion and the vote because he is an employee of the museum (the applicant). Commissioner Koski also recused himself because his firm is providing services to the project.

Mr. Mathis presented the staff report recommending that the HPC adopt staff findings, deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for signs A.3, A.4.1, and B.1 and approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for signs A.1, A.2, A.4, C.1, and D.1, subject to the following conditions and changes:

1. Alternative 2 (with background) is the approved version of A.1 and a border must be added to the sign.
2. The light fixtures for the painted wall sign (Sign A.1) must be approved by the HPC staff.
3. The plastic faces proposed for Sign C.1 are not approved. The letters must have a single stroke of exposed neon in each letter.
4. The proposed reflective sign paint is not approved. All reflective paint must be changed to non-reflective paint.

The public hearing was then opened. Mr. Bill Keyes, the project manager for Mill City Museum, spoke about the project. He explained that they designed their sign package based on historical pictures of the area. Their research showed that there was roof top signage. He stated that their signs contribute to the character of the

riverfront and they are more than just advertising. Mr. Jim Grabowski, the designer from HGA Architects, also spoke about the signs and stated that they fit the character of the area.

Commissioners discussed the sign designs and the sign lighting. Commissioner Housum asked about Finding # 13, regarding using reflective paint and if it is not allowed because of the red color or, because of the reflective quality of the paint. Mr. Mathis replied because of the reflective quality of the paint. He went on to explain that the outside of the individual channel letter sign would be painted with a reflective color paint that would be fairly bright. He is recommending that a more traditional flat, gloss or semi-gloss paint be used. Commissioner Grover asked if the rooftop sign facing the river is appropriate and does the sign meet the design guidelines. Mr. Mathis stated that the guidelines do not recommend plastic lettering unless it is a solid opaque material. In the past, the Commission has approved a couple of signs with lexan letters that are backlit. An example would be the Flour Exchange sign. It is an opaque metal sign with cut out letters that have a piece of lexan behind them that is backlit.

Commissioner Neiswander asked if a sign that was illuminated by a light shining on it, would it be acceptable for a roof top sign. Mr. Mathis said there are two issues; first, is a roof top sign appropriate and secondly are the proposed materials appropriate. To answer Commissioner Neiswander's question, he replied, yes it would be appropriate to down or up light the sign. Commissioner Neiswander asked the applicant if this would be acceptable to them. Mr. Grabowski said he could not answer that without seeing a design, and expressed his concern about the visibility of the sign without neon to illuminate the sign for readability not just visibility. The issue is not so much the use of neon, but the use of plastic lettering, commented Commissioner Grover. Mr. Grabowski stated that each individual letter would have white neon. Commissioner Anderson added that the North Star sign is not neon and it is still quite visible from across the river. The applicants agreed that the sign is visible, but not readable. They want people to be able to read the words on their sign. Eventually, people will recognize the logo. Commissioner Grover asked how many signs are being proposed on the river side. Mr. Mathis replied that the applicant is proposing two signs facing the river; one is a roof-top sign facing the river, and the other one is a 3 X 3 foot sign on the Parkway. Mr. Grabowski stated that there is not a lot of area for a sign. Either the sign lettering goes across the historic stone façade, or on the wall behind that sits back almost 60 feet, so, you have to put the sign up high and then make it large enough so it is visible from a distance.

No one else wished to speak for or against the application. The public hearing was then closed and

MOTION by Commissioner Housum to adopt the staff findings and the staff recommendations and add in the approval of Sign A.3 with the neon, but without the lexan panels and give staff the authority to approve the revised design for the sign; and, also to approve Signs A.2, A 4.1, and D.1.

Mr. Mathis asked for the **MOTION** to be repeated to make sure it is recorded correctly.

Commissioner Housum restated her **MOTION**: to adopt staff findings and recommendations with the following changes: in addition to what staff recommends approval of; approve Sign A.3, with neon but without the lexan panels, and give staff the authority to approve the final sign with something other than lexan; and approve Signs A.2, A 4.1 and D.1.

Mr. Mathis clarified each sign with Commissioner Housm's **MOTION**:

Sign A.1 - The painted wall sign on the front of the building is approved.

Signs A.2 - The signs etched on the glass doors are approved.

Sign A.3 - The roof top sign is approved with the neon, but without the lexan panels, and staff must approve the final design for the sign.

Sign A.4 - The wall-mounted sign is approved.

Sign A.4.1 - The wall sign mounted next to the Wheat House entrance is approved.

Signs B.1 - The hanging signs under the canopy are approved.

Sign C.1 – The individual channel letter sign on the front of the building are approved without the plastic faces and with the staff recommended changes.

Sign D.1 – The vertical projecting wall sign on Chicago Avenue is approved.

SECOND by Commissioner Neiswander.

Commissioner Grover added a friendly amendment to add a finding that says there is historic documentation of roof top signage on this building. Commissioner Housum accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Glancy added a friendly amendment to add a condition to the approval that says the Planning Department must approve the border color for sign A.1 (the painted wall sign). Commissioner Housum accepted the friendly amendment.

MOTION APPROVED with 2 abstentions (Koski and Stevens).